United Nations S/2006/668

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 August 2006

Original: English

Letter dated 16 August from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour, on instruction from my Government, to submit to you a copy of a letter dated 11 August 2006 signed by José Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, on United Nations electoral assistance for Timor-Leste (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Sofia **Borges**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

06-47361 (E) 210806

Annex to the letter dated 16 August 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to formally request the United Nations to observe and verify the election process in Timor-Leste, including the legislative and presidential elections scheduled for April and May 2007.

The Government of Timor-Leste shares the view put forward in General Assembly resolution 46/137, in which the Assembly underscored "the significance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which establish that the authority to govern shall be based on the will of the people, as expressed in genuine and periodic elections" and declared "that determining the will of the people requires an electoral process that provides an equal opportunity for all citizens to become candidates and put forward their political views, individually and in cooperation with others, as provided in national constitutions and laws".

In order to assist the Government of Timor-Leste in fulfilling this mission, the objectives of United Nations electoral assistance would essentially be twofold:

(a) To assist Timor-Leste in its efforts to hold credible and legitimate democratic elections in accordance with internationally recognized criteria established in universal and regional human rights instruments;

(b) To contribute to building Timor-Leste's institutional capacity to organize democratic elections that are genuine and periodic and have the full confidence of the contending parties and the electorate.

The United Nations verification mission would observe and verify the legitimacy of the various stages of the electoral process and the compliance of the national electoral authorities with the electoral regulations.

The scope of the verification would include ensuring the impartiality of the national electoral commission, freedom of movement and assembly and equal and fair access to the media for all political contenders, voter education, updating of voter registration, electoral campaigns, polling and the vote count.

The verification mission and the Government shall agree on the best way to provide support to enable the political parties to conduct political campaigns. My Government is firmly committed to creating a level playing field for political parties and is considering providing grants in equal amounts to all.

The verification mission would be mandated to produce a report and make recommendations at the end of each phase of the electoral process and a final report attesting to the election's transparency, fairness and credibility. The United Nations would be responsible for the public announcement of the transparency, fairness and credibility of the election.

(*Signed*) José **Ramos-Horta**
Prime Minister, Timor-Leste

06-47361